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ALEXANDRIA AND THE NEW TESTAMENT.

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ALL great realities awaken a twofold interest in view of what they are and how they came to be. A masterpiece, whether in literature, art, or life, by its very inspiration urges us to study its secret. Along two lines work on the New Testament has been tireless and abundant—one in setting forth the power, beauty, and worth of the truth itself; the other in making clear the conditions which were antecedent to its deliverance, the environment in which it was proclaimed, and the results which its deliverance brought about. It is along this latter line that our theme lies, and the purpose of this paper is to answer as briefly as is consistent with clearness the question "What did Alexandria do in the preparation of the New Testament message?" Did she have a mission which should place her name beside those of other great cities whose growth and influence were factors in God's plan for the accomplishment of this last revelation to us, or are we wrong in supposing that the language of her streets and the impress of her thought is found in these sacred pages? To anyone who knows anything of the thought and life of the first Christian centuries there can be no question about the wide-reaching influence of the Egyptian capital. Her schools were the pride of scholarship, and her methods the charm of both teacher and pupil. Some of the greatest names among the Fathers were familiar in her streets, and the discussions of her schools are manifest in nearly every department of Christian thought. But with the development of catechetical instruction, with the strange commixtures of gnostic teachings and with the intellectual, stirring theology of these later days, we have not now to do. We are to look at that period which begins with the first of the Ptolemies, in the earlier part of the

third century B. C.—the golden age of Hellenism—and which ends for us with a name which belongs rather to the sovereignty of thought than of force—Philo Judæus. He died about the year 40 of our era. This period, no less than the one succeeding it to which we have referred, was one of intellectual agitation, earnest questionings, and complex interpretations. Indeed its problems were brought face to face with the teachings of Christ and his apostles soon after these teachings were given, and its one fascinating method of solving the declarations of poets and prophets worked out many a fanciful comment upon the scriptures of the New and Old Testaments. I refer, of course, to the allegorical system of interpretation.

Did space permit, it would be of interest to present a somewhat detailed picture of Alexandria as it was in the days of Ptolemy Philadelphus. The liberal policy of Alexander, with its ideal of placing centers of Greek culture over all the then known world, was earnestly followed by the Ptolemies, and Alexandria soon became in consequence a capital of wealth and power. Its ports, palaces, theaters, and temples were all built upon a magnificent and costly scale. In the time of Philadelphus, not only was it a city of imposing avenues and multiform activities, but leaving out of sight all the smaller public edifices, there were at least thirty remarkable structures which would claim the attention of visitors as do today the Louvre in Paris, the Palais de Justice in Brussels, or Westminster in London. This will give some idea of its dignity and importance. In order, however, to prepare the way for an estimate of the influence exerted upon the preparation of the New Testament message, it is necessary for us to linger a moment at three points in the city—in the Jewish quarter, at the Museum, and in the market place. They are the critical points for the study of Alexandria's peculiar place and purpose.

The mission of Alexandrian Judaism was peculiar. From the first it had in the varied history of the city a conspicuous part. Alexander had given the Jews equal rights and privileges with all other citizens at its foundation. They had their own *alabarch* or governor, who, in conjunction with the Sanhedrin, exercised

control over them. To be sure, a wall at one time about the Jewish quarter marked the hostility which they experienced from the Greeks and native Egyptians because of political jealousy and religious hatred, but here the Jews prospered and in the midst of their wealth found time for intellectual improvement. Their energy, temperance, and mental quickness won for them that position of dignity and self-respect which they eagerly sought for here and in other Greek cities, and the charms of Greek culture proved irresistible. Within that inner wall Plato was studied as well as Moses, and Greek was the "common language." "The presiding genius of Egyptian Judaism was the royal house of Ptolemy." Within a stone's throw of their city boundary stood the Museum and they could not go over to the docks without coming into contact with the manifold influences of Greek life and custom. In this northeastern part of the old city began, then, that amalgamation which was so long to be serviceable in the history of thought. Here were started the questions which brought the law into comparison with philosophy and which opened the way for the interpretation of one in the terms of the other. Hence came, doubtless, the call for the Greek version of the books of Moses. That busy, thriving section was linked in a strange way with the fortune of the gospels and the epistles. In order to see more clearly the connection we must hold awhile by the Museum. Our use of this ancient word does not lead us to think of a university, but as the muses and their priest were associated with the schools, it is nothing else than the great center of learning that here opens before us. And there could not be found in all Alexandria a better expression of the broad, noble policy of the Ptolemies to make their city a center of intellectual and political worth than this same Museum, With its theater for lectures and public assemblies, its large dining room for its professors, its long marble colonnades adorned with obelisks and sphinxes, and its famous library open to all who would use it, either for studying or for copying its treasures, it brought to the very door of the Jews the wisdom and culture of the heathen world. Nor was the equipment merely in metal and marble. The names of some of the librarians

are guarantee for the earnest work that was done here.¹ Every facility in the way of retirement and help was given to men. Lectures could be heard upon poetry, mathematics, science, philosophy, and medicine. The Platonist, the Aristotelian, the Epicurean, and the Stoic were among those who here earnestly discussed the problems of creation, life, and destiny; and the spirit that was busy allegorizing the old Greek poets was making inquiry into the thoughts of all philosophies for an explanation of the mysteries of mind and nature. Is it supposable that Jews were never found listening eagerly to the expositions of the classics of other lands and times? This was a place of marked intellectual activity, and that, too, with a fascination which comes from untrammelled speculation and comparative study.

The third point of interest for us in the city is widely different in character from that we have just noted. The market place of Alexandria was crowded with life and business. Wares from every part of the world were exhibited, "the amber of the Baltic, the salt fish of Pontus, the coffee of Cyprus, the timber of Macedonia and Crete, the pottery and oil of Greece, the spices of Arabia, the splendid birds and embroideries of India and Ceylon, the gold and iron of Africa, the apes, leopards, and elephants of tropical climes." Greeks, Egyptians, Romans, and merchants from the provinces of Asia Minor were busy in trade, and the variegated scene on the shore was matched by that of the harbor itself where ships from many ports lay at anchor. One fact invests this scene with supreme interest for us. There is everywhere one medium of communication — the Greek. In some cases it was spoken with halting, awkward expression; in others with confusion of foreign idiom and with the admixture of strange words; yet it was Greek. Just so at the Museum and all along the streets and in the Jewish quarter itself. Cosmopolitan as the life was, it found its unification in this. There was one language in palace, court, school, theater, and shop.

¹ Zenodotus, the grammarian; Callimachus, the poet; Eratosthenes, the astronomer; Apollonius of Rhodes; Aristophanes, the founder of philological criticism; Aristarchus, the critic.

The Jews, the culture of heathendom, the language which was the common vehicle of thought—these were the factors toward the result into which we wish to make inquiry. In looking into the New Testament for marks of their influence our attention must be directed to two things: (1) the language, (2) the thought.

I. *The language of the New Testament.*—It does not take a student long to discover that in reading the Greek of the New Testament he has not before him the diction of the prose classics with which he has become familiar. Not only, generally speaking, is there greater simplicity of structure, but there are peculiarities of idiom and forms of expression which at once demand attention. The whole atmosphere is changed. It is another kind of speech that is being made the vehicle of thought. It is not our purpose now to enter fully into the character of the Greek of the New Testament, but we must deal with enough of the facts to make manifest the relationship of Alexandria to this whole phenomenon. There were Greek colonists in Egypt before Alexander came to it, but it was his arrival and his policy which put Greek into the foremost place and made it, as we have just seen, the one language of intercourse. But it was not pure Greek, and by "pure" is meant the refined Greek of the classics of the best days of Athens' glory, that Alexander brought to Egypt. It is said that the Macedonians and the Greeks proper could not understand each other,² in which case Attic, which was the basis of their court language, had been seriously modified in the mouths of these northerners. We do not need to go so far away as Macedonia to realize that change in the Attic of Plato began very early. Aristotle is himself on the border line between classic and post-classic Greek and is often reckoned with those on this side of the dividing line. He admits many new forms and new words into his pages. A living language can never be insensible to its environment, and when we remember what the main purpose of a common medium of intercourse was we can better understand the influence of that environment. Those Macedonians, Egyptians, Jews, and Romans who met

² MULLACH, *Geschichte der Vulgärsprache*, p. 14.

together in the market place of Alexandria were not there to turn neat periods, indulge in fine phrases, or polish a thought to the finish required by some delicate Greek participle. They were there to be understood, and to accomplish their object they took hold of the plainest Greek they could find, and to help themselves out turned some of their own words and idioms into Greek forms. Add the resultant modifications to that which already existed in the predominating type of Greek of the court and official life, viz., the Macedonian, and you have the kind of Greek which was characteristic of Alexandria, and perhaps, also, though not in the same degree, of other cities under the sway of Alexander's policy. "The later Greek," as it is called, is just this mixture. It was the real "common dialect." Viteau goes so far as to say that to this Greek and to this alone which had nobler forms on its literary side ought the appellation of "the Greek language" properly be given, for before that it had been mainly dialectic and without universal recognition.³ If we have rightly conceived of the position and importance of Alexandria, it is not difficult to see how it became a new center for the diffusion of this speech. But important as this modified speech is—for it appears in the New Testament—it is not the chief point of interest in the inquiry into the development of language in Alexandria. The Jews of the city were as important a factor in its commercial life as they have been in the same kind of life everywhere since where they have had an equal chance, and commerce brought them into close contact with Greek. It was, therefore, with this very kind of plain, coarse, corrupted Greek that they had to do. This they gradually took up as their own speech, coloring it, of course, largely with the Hebrew idiom. It is this peculiar kind of Hebraistic Greek that appears in the Septuagint and in a less degree in the New Testament. Surrounded as they were by Greek life and customs and compelled to use the common medium of intercourse, it is not strange that the Jews forgot their own tongue, and the most plausible reason for the Greek version itself was this very need of the sacred books in a tongue they could understand. It certainly accounts for the character

³J. VITEAU, *Étude sur le grec du Nouveau Testament*, Paris, 1893.

of its Greek, which, as I have said, is nearer the language of the street than is that of the New Testament. The higher and better expressions of the "common dialect" are found in such works as the Wisdom of Solomon and the works of Philo. These manifest, indeed, the same general character of vocabulary, but are characterized by a nobler style. It is because of the fact that we possess all these works of sacred and secular writers that we are able to speak more intelligently of Hellenistic Greek—for, properly speaking, all Greek spoken by foreigners was Hellenistic—but in the Septuagint, in the Wisdom of Solomon, and in Philo we have the meeting place of Hebrew and western thought, and the interesting study for us is the use made of the Greek to give expression to them all. In two particulars the Septuagint, the preparation of which ranged over perhaps about 100 years, is supposed to have influenced the vocabulary of the New Testament. These two particulars are (1) range of vocabulary, (2) significance of vocabulary. It would be natural to suppose that the Greek version which came into immediate and widespread use in the dispersion would have had the effect of stereotyping the speech of the Jews. That it was thus widely used the quotations from it in the New Testament seem to show, as do also the allusions to it and reminiscences of it found all through the epistles, but when we come to estimate just the influence of this wide reading upon the vocabulary of the New Testament we can, as far as range of vocabulary is concerned, agree with Professor Abbott of Dublin, who says that "the amount of the influence of the Septuagint version on the language of the New Testament is very often exaggerated."⁴ Let me here express my indebtedness to the work of Dr. Kennedy⁵ for his valuable help toward seeing this more clearly. If we leave out proper names and their derivatives, there are 4829 words in the New Testament vocabulary; of these 3850 are found in Greek previous to Aristotle (322 B. C.), *i. e.*, in the period of classic Greek. That leaves about 950 post-Aristotelian words in the New Testament. Of these, 314 are found in the Septuagint.

⁴ *Essays Chiefly on the Original Texts of the Old and New Testaments*, p. 67.

⁵ *Sources of New Testament Greek*, pp. 62, 88, 93.

As about one-half of this latter number occurs in the writings of the "common dialect," we have about 150 which are peculiar to the Septuagint and the New Testament. "About 30 per cent. of the total number of 'biblical' words in the New Testament occur in the Septuagint." These figures must change the usual conception of the relation of the Septuagint to the New Testament as far as range of vocabulary is concerned. Several reasons might be given for the real facts as we find them, prominent among which would be the need of a wider range of conceptions than the Old Testament writers had been called upon to express, but these reasons are aside from our purpose. Much might be said of the influence of the Hebrew idiom upon the Greek, and it is beyond question that this was, in a measure, stereotyped by the Septuagint. There is a much greater advance in vocabulary than in diction in the New Testament, though the Greek of the Acts, of James, and of the epistle to the Hebrews attains a high level of pure expression. To be sure the writers of the New Testament were themselves Jews, and the influence of their mother tongue, the Aramaic, is evident, but beyond and in addition to this they carry over the familiar idioms of the Hebraistic Greek of the Old Testament. There are also evident, in the diminutives and compounds which in some instances, at least, have no added force, peculiarities of the popular speech of the Alexandrian streets.

Turning from range of vocabulary to the significance of it, we are no longer in a region where mere numbers can tell the whole story. Words must be weighed rather than counted. The contact of Hebrew and heathen thought compelled the transfer of the conceptions of the Old Testament into a medium which, flexible as it was, and finished as it had been, was yet a stranger to all those conceptions. It was no easy task to make the transfer. Two factors were adapting the medium to its more effective use for Christ's own truth, the actual work of the translators of the Septuagint and that discussion of the relation of the Old Testament conceptions to philosophic dogmas which gave a broader, richer meaning to some of the Greek words afterwards to go into the New Testament. Take, *e. g.*, such a list

of words as these, all of which had been used in the LXX with a peculiar "biblical" sense, and what is meant will appear: *ἄγγελος, ἀδελφός, διάβολος, δόξα, ἔθνος, εἰδωλον, εἰρήνη, ἐκκλησία, ἡμέρα, θάνατος, θεός, ἱλασμός, κόσμος, κρίσις, λύτρωσις, μυστήριον, σάρξ*. These words all had their own meanings in classic Greek, but no dictionary of simply classic speech could adequately define them. Take such a word as *πνεῦμα*; Professor Jowett tells us that "to have given a Greek in the time of Socrates a notion of what was meant by the Holy Spirit would have been like giving the blind a conception of colors or the deaf of musical sounds." That very word starts in the Old Testament with a conception entirely foreign to Greek thought. This latter connects it always with its physiological aspect: wind, breath. As the expression of a psychological conception it is unknown in classic Greek. Of course the New Testament has deepened and at the same time more sharply defined the word, but the beginnings of this process are in the Old Testament. The word was carried over to a new sphere by the Septuagint. The deeply interesting study of these changes is brought out in Cremer's great work, which deserves faithful usage by all New Testament students. The center of philosophic discussion in Alexandria was the Museum. Here, through all the years of the city's glory, was carried on that development, refinement, and adjustment of thought which demanded a developed medium of expression. All philosophy in Alexandria had a deeply theological interest; so much so that it has been denied that philosophy pure and simple could be heard there. Ueberweg thus sums up the subjects of their discussions: "The dualistic opposition of the divine and the earthly; an abstract conception of God excluding all knowledge of the divine nature; contempt for the world of the senses on the ground of the Platonic doctrines of matter and of the descent of the soul from a superior world into the body; the theory of intermediate potencies or beings through whom God acts upon the world of phenomena; the requirement of an ascetic self-emancipation from the bondage of sense, and faith in a higher revelation to man when in a state called enthusiasm." Here is a broad range of speculation, and quite a literature remains to

tell of its character. We know how it tried to "purify" the thought of God, even by tampering with the text of the Old Testament, and how its idealizing tendency is manifest in such works as the Book of Wisdom and in Philo. Out of it came the power to express in more significant forms the highest truths of which we are capable. It prepared the way for the "Logos," indeed made that word familiar all about the Mediterranean, and when we come to mark the relation of the epistle to the Hebrews to the Book of Wisdom we shall see how the New Testament takes up its phraseology and uses it for its own purpose. It is to be noted that all that was serviceable for the New Testament was the vehicle of thought, not the thought itself. John's Logos differs from the Logos of Philo, as we shall later see, but that John took a term familiar in Alexandria and Ephesus is beyond doubt. Professor Jowett's reflection upon the language of Philo will confirm what is meant: "As we read his works the truth flashes upon us that the language of the New Testament is not isolated from the language of the world in general; the spirit rather than the letter is new, the whole, not the parts, the life more than the form." No study brings one more clearly face to face with the divine in this message from heaven to us than just this.

Such in brief is the part Alexandria had to take in helping toward the formation of the Greek of the New Testament. By reason of it she stands upon that line which begins in the days of Athens' glory and runs on through five hundred years of varied Greek life. Even as concerns the language in which the New Testament was written, had Christ come sooner than he actually did the "medium" for his truth would not have been fully ready. The form in which we now have the New Testament belongs also to "the fullness of time." Alexandria had a definite mission with regard to that form.

Already we have come close to the second division of our theme in hints regarding the Logos and the epistle to the Hebrews. We turn now to ask directly the relationship of Alexandria

II. *To the thought of the New Testament.*—It is impossible, in

a limited space, to touch upon all the numerous parallelisms which have been asserted to exist between the New Testament and the Jewish-Greek literature of the Alexandrian era. We shall confine our attention to only those which stand out with considerable prominence: the Logos doctrine of John, the teaching of Paul in the epistle to the Colossians, and the epistle to the Hebrews. There are in each points worthy of consideration. Chronologically, in accordance with such judgments as those of Pfleiderer, they should be placed in the order: Hebrews, Colossians, John, which order marks the development and culmination of Christological thought. We shall take them rather as they meet us in the books of the New Testament, and begin with the Logos of John. Whatever may be said as to the limits of the Johannine interpretation of Christ's thought in the fourth gospel, there can be no question that the prologue is his own. Christ does not, as is well known, use the word "Logos" regarding himself. We can quite agree with Beyschlag that there is no Alexandrianism in the direct teachings of the Master himself. Why, then, should John take this peculiar term, and what is its origin? As part of our answer we must give some idea of the way in which the word had been used in Alexandria, and what occasioned its employment. Among the first and fundamental inquiries of Greek philosophy was one regarding the eternal ground of phenomenal existence and another regarding the relation of the infinite cause to the finite world and to the soul of man.⁶ The answer to the first inquiry was sought in a primitive substance such as fire, air, water: as regards the relation of the Infinite, there was on one side a denial of a transcendent cause, or on the other the assertion of its entire separation from the world. It could come into contact with the finite only by some intermediary being or form. A materialistic or pantheistic conception of the universe was impossible to the Jews; hence, they were never attracted by those systems which in varying forms identified the Logos with the substance of things. It was the idealism of Plato which offered them help in their religio-philosophic problems, and when he identified this first cause with "the good" τὸ ἀγαθόν, and

⁶ See DRUMMOND'S *Philo Judæus*, I, p. 28.

Aristotle made him so far above the universe that he could not come into immediate relations with it, is it any wonder that an allegorical method of interpretation attempted, by explaining away the anthropomorphic and anthropopathic expressions of the Old Testament, to elevate and "purify" the Jewish conception of Jehovah, and to show how that Jehovah and the *τὸ ἀγαθόν* were identical? But the more that line of endeavor was followed, the more completely was the practical value of religion destroyed. A god upon a far away throne of isolated majesty, or one set off in a lonely and self-centered consciousness might be, philosophically considered, a perfect god. It was simply impossible to rest in such cold, dreary abstractions as this. The situation gives us just *the* difficulty which religious philosophy had then to meet, indeed, which it usually has to meet, viz., the satisfaction of the soul through some possible way of communion with God. The doctrine of the Alexandrian Logos came in for just this purpose. Plato had no doctrine of the Logos, but in his teaching regarding the cosmical soul he prepared the way for the Jewish thinkers who studied him. When Philo came to write, this singular word of John's prologue had been for five centuries in Greek thought, now corresponding to the rational law apparent in the world, now to human reason, now to that which was called "the mind," now to the "universal soul" itself, but in all cases occupying an intermediate position, and manifesting that which otherwise could not be known or understood.

Before now we refer to the resemblances and differences in the descriptions of Philo himself, it will be needful for us to look along one other line of thought which converges in him with the one already noticed. It comes from the Hebrew Scriptures, and branches off into Alexandrian literature at the point where the doctrine of wisdom is taken up by the writer of the Book of Wisdom, and set forth in terms of rare beauty. It is apparent in the Old Testament itself in those descriptions, "the Angel of Jehovah" (Ex. 23:21), and "the Word of Jehovah" (Ps. 33:6, 9; Isa. 55:10, 11). In the poetical personifications of this "word," and in the attempted explanations of the former phrase lie the beginnings of the conceptions of an "objective" manifes-

tation of God which was more distinctly set forth in the book of Proverbs in the description of wisdom (chap. 8-9), and which was developed in this form by both *Ecclesiasticus*—a Palestinian work, and in the *Wisdom of Solomon*—an Alexandrian writing, both from the second century B. C. In this latter work the old problem meets us of the reconciliation of the doctrine of a transcendent god—one above and outside the universe—with the doctrine of a god whom we can in some way get at for help and comfort. It is solved by the teaching regarding "Wisdom," "who was present with God when he made the world, and knows what is acceptable in his sight and right in his commandments," . . . "who knows and understands all things," and who by coming to us, saves us. (*Book of Wisdom*, 9: 9, 11, 18.) "She is the brightness of the everlasting light, the unspotted mirror of the power of God and the image of his goodness. Being one she can do all things, and remaining in herself she maketh all things new, and in all ages entering into holy souls she maketh them friends of God and prophets." (*Ibid.* 7: 26-28.) Weber, in his "Teachings of the Talmud," shows us how in the Targums the "Memra," or "Word of God," is personified to take again this intermediate place. "God dwells in and works through this word."

After briefly noting the striking features of Philo's Logos, we shall be ready to estimate the relation of the whole to the New Testament. At the end of the long line of teachers and thinkers in Alexandria before the dissemination of the gospel message stands this famous Hellenist. He, in a measure, gathers up all that had gone before, and elaborately attempts the fusion of the best elements of Greek culture and Jewish theology. At times we seem to have an almost astonishing anticipation of something which meets us in the pages of the New Testament, only to find, after all, that it is to be taken in another sense widely removed. It is, therefore, not surprising that in some instances directly opposite conclusions should be formed regarding his teachings. Of one thing we may be sure, and that is that he reflects fully and clearly the intellectual tone and aim of Alexandrian culture in the years before Christ's com-

ing. When he calls the Logos God and distinguishes between *θεός* and *ὁ θεός* as John does; when he posits the intermediate work of the Logos in creation; views the Logos as the enlightening power in the world; declares that it lifts up the souls of the good to God and dwells in the hearts of the righteous; defines him by such terms as *ὁ θεῖος λόγος, πρωτόγονος, παράκλητος, εἰκὼν θεοῦ, ἀρχιερεύς*, we find ourselves close to the thought of the New Testament. Philo, from his point of view, could just as well have written: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men." So far John and Philo are in perfect accord. But there is another side of this whole teaching concerning the Logos in Philo, and with that John's teaching is in the sharpest contrast. It is difficult to say whether Philo taught the real personality of his Logos. He certainly would have quickly and emphatically denied the possibility of an incarnation, for he believed that matter is evil. Greek philosophy, Jewish speculation, Jewish-Greek religious philosophy could never have written, "And the Word became flesh." As Dr. Plummer puts it in his Commentary on John (Cambridge Grk. Test.): "The personification of the divine word in the Old Testament is poetical, in Philo metaphysical, in St. John historical." John's reflection upon the life of his Master, with the help of the Spirit, and perhaps [of the christology of Paul's later epistles and of the teaching of the epistle to the Hebrews, gave him the content of his prologue. At any rate, he took this much-talked-of word out of the region of mere speculation and made it stand for a reality that had lived and acted, suffered and triumphed amid the familiar scenes of Judea and Galilee. Whether John had read Philo we cannot say. We do know that Alexandrian teachings were spread far and wide and had influenced Palestinean theology.⁷ The persistent repetition of the teaching of the intermediary character of the Logos, all through Greek philosophic thought, as well as the

⁷ See GFRÖRER'S *Das Jahrhundert des Heils*; II. Theil.

equivalent doctrine of Wisdom and of the Word in Jewish theology—did not these lead John to the selection of this term? It commended his gospel to Greek readers at once, whether they would receive it or not; it gave definite, sharp, clear outline to the vague, uncertain, shifting speculations regarding that being who could represent God to man and present man to God; it put matter in its right place; it gave inspired assent to all that was good and true in the thought that Alexandria herself had worked out. The very discussions of the schools made way and place for the word. John's use of it is one of the instances wherein a word that had long served a noble purpose was glorified by being made the minister of the Holy Spirit in the revelation of truth. Formal then as the relation of Alexandria is to John's prologue, we can better appreciate all that that prologue means by some understanding of the unwearied but unsatisfying philosophizing of the Egyptian capital.

Along that line of historical criticism of the New Testament, which really began with Ferdinand Baur, of Tübingen, some gains have been made to the number of genuine books, but much is yet under discussion. Both the pastoral epistles and the closely interrelated letters to the Ephesians and the Colossians have been persistently denied a place among the writings of Paul. The epistle to the Colossians is characterized as "Deutero-Pauline," and mainly for the reason that it shows traces of Alexandrian modifications of Pauline thought. It comes, therefore, in view of this, into the line of our inquiry. Has the letter the impress upon it of the Judea-Greek thought of Egypt? It is the christology of the epistle that has been for certain objectors its condemnation. Now, we may admit at once that in this respect the epistle is unique. Nowhere else has Paul reached such a height, nor with such fullness set forth the supremacy, majesty, and comprehensiveness of the name of Christ. Before we examine the alleged Alexandrian influence behind, and informing the teaching, let us for a moment recall the reason for it. Thessalonica had had her troubles; Corinth had heard the derision of the Greeks about the resurrection doctrine; Galatia had been bewitched by Judaizing teachings; in

Colosse a new and complex error had shown its seductive face. It came with large promises; it demanded definite and rigorous conditions. It had a new way of implying the insufficiency of Christ's redemption and offered a supplement that appealed to pride. It had behind it a doctrine with which every Alexandrian thinker was familiar, whether he accepted it or not—the essential evil of matter. This was accompanied by the usual teachings of the separateness of a good God from the world, and the necessity of getting free from all contaminations of sense. Intermediate beings were necessitated in view of the former; asceticism in view of the latter. Cerinthus, the exponent of just such heresy as this in John's time, was, at one time, a resident in Alexandria. It was a kind of teaching that was in the air. The valley of the Lycus was admirably suited to it, for, as one has said of it, "the decay and mixture of old creeds in the Asiatic intellect had created a soil of loose fertility—a footfall there sufficing to upturn to the warm air half-germinating theosophies." The Colossians were told that if they would prove their worthiness by their rigid self-denials they might raise themselves higher and higher toward that mysterious unseen world in which dwelt those beings who had come out from the abyss of divinity, and of whom Christ was one. They could thus have a knowledge that could belong only to the initiated. They could have the sweet satisfaction of being spiritually above their fellows here, and of being redeemed, in part, by their own actions hereafter. Impelled anew to vindicate the supreme honor of his Master, the apostle wrote these sentences in the first and second chapters of the epistle (1:15-20; 2:9-15), which should do away with their vague and complex imaginings and stop their misguided strivings. In reading them one is at once struck with those terms which afterward played such an important part in the gnosticism which flourished in Alexandria and went thence to other parts of the world, *e. g.*, *πλήρωμα*, *γνώσις*, *ἐπίγνωσις*, *σοφία*, *σύνεσις*, and the characterizations of the orders of the spiritual world, *θρόνοι*, *κυριότητες*, *ἀρχαί*, *ἐξουσίαι*. We are also impressed with the phraseology which has become familiar to us in the study of Philo and the Jewish-Greek Alex-

andrian literature. Of this kind is the description of Christ as the *εἰκὼν τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ ἀόρατου* (1:15), or as *πρωτότοκος πάσης κτίσεως*, and the definition of his work according to the Stoic model in the term *συνέστηκεν*—(1:17). May it not be true, in view of all this, that we have at least an Alexandrian follower of Paul in these christological sections? The question carries us at once to the examination of these singular terms and of the thought in relation to that of the other and accepted epistles of Paul. That Alexandrian phraseology has been borrowed here, as in the case of the Logos of John seems clear enough. In connection with his doctrine of the Logos Philo uses just such descriptions as we find in this epistle with the exception of the word *πλήρωμα*, which does not ever have with him the sense required here. But just as the Logos was in the mind of John a different conception from Philo's, so with Paul a difference goes through all the interpretations which open up these terms. The widening, spiritualizing work of Alexandria had been busy with them, and while it failed in getting the right notion of the eternal Logos and his relation to God, its very struggles with conceptions in this profound and speculative region of thought called into being expressions, which, now, in our New Testament set forth to us, as far as human language can, the truth in these high matters. Paul took in part Alexandrian terms to meet Alexandrian speculation and to set right the would-be wisdom about him. We say, Paul, though mindful of the supposed contradictions to his own ways of thinking, which are said to exist in this epistle. If it be true that everywhere else Paul makes not Christ but God the ultimate end of creation—a conception never assigned to the Logos of Alexandrian speculation—yet in his thought the universe has its final aim in the kingdom of God, or in Christ its king, and of that glorious manifestation which shall issue in just this kingdom all creation is expectant⁸ (Rom. 8:22). If it be said that the teaching that the indwelling of the divine fullness in the incarnate Christ is directly opposed to all that Paul elsewhere says about his emptiness and humiliation, it may be replied that correct exegesis puts the epistle's teaching into direct line

⁸ See BRUCE's *Paul's Conception of Christianity*, p. 335.

with all that is elsewhere given (see Lightfoot). It is true that angels and angelic powers have a new position and prominence in the words of this epistle, but that is because they had usurped the place of Christ in the false teaching under correction. The very way in which the apostle refers to them shows that he thinks little of their orders and ranks, in view of the wholly inferior position that is theirs when compared with Christ, who is Lord over all. Both the epistle to the Romans (8: 38) and those to the Corinthians contain similar enumerations. Indeed, there is not a doctrine in these noble passages which is not in its germ stated in the undisputed epistles. These doctrines awaited but the occasion of this critical moment in Colosse for their full explicit statement. To argue that because all the terms here used appeared in the gnosticism of the early second century, therefore this epistle must date from that time, is to forget that this whole trend of thought had existence before this time. If one looks into the various works which deal with this strange compound of western and oriental notions, he will find hardly any two agreeing as to the time or place of its origin. It came out of the fusion of racial habits of thought, and was busy with its solutions in one form or another before the apostle's day. As another has said, "it is found in the Zend²Avesta ; it is found in Philo." As Paul uses them, the words would not be adequate for the later expression of its conceptions. No, we are not dealing here with the gnosticism of the second century, but with a Judeo-Christian form of speculation that gained its inspiration in all probability from Essenism, as that had in part from such philosophic teachings as found place in Alexandria. The epistle is not Alexandrian in thought ; it has borrowed Alexandrian phraseology, but it has put to it the sober, spirit-inspired teachings of the apostle.

One other field of investigation remains, and then we are ready to summarize results ; that is the epistle to the Hebrews. It is worthy of separate and fuller treatment. For, apart from its value as an exposition of the place and lasting validity of Christianity, it compels care in all statements regarding standards of canonicity and the measurement of worth by known

authorship. The same criticism which has made Colossians Deutero-Pauline, has made this epistle Alexandrian in origin and tone. Nay, more, the criticism which dismisses none of the Pauline letters as by a later hand has marked the Alexandrian impress upon this epistle. It does not fall within the scope of this article to discuss the question of authorship, nor to make an extended estimate of the Greek as Greek, nor to compare the style with that of Paul. The one question which interests us is, "Have we evidence of Alexandrian influence of any kind?" The answer must consider (1) the expression of the thought, (2) the thought itself. As introductory to the former, let me call attention to the purity and finish of the Greek. There are some Hebraistic terms in it such as were common to the Christianized Greek of the time, *e. g.*, κληρονόμος, ἀγιάζειν, σὰρξ καὶ αἷμα but as a whole, we have here to do with some of the best Greek in the New Testament. We are not now concerned with Professor Plumptre's supposition that the author of the *Book of Wisdom* and of the epistle to the Hebrews may have been Apollos, but we are indebted to him for some facts which are useful for our study. We have already spoken of the *Book of Wisdom* as standing in the line of the development of the Logos doctrine on the Jewish side. Is it not significant that this book has in it some of the most characteristic words of the vocabulary of the epistle to the Hebrews? In describing Christ as "the effulgence of his glory" the distinctive term ἀπαύγασμα is from the Alexandrian book, as is also the word πολυμερῶς in the same verse, and when the writer would describe the word of God as "quick and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword," the significant term of the comparison lies again in a description of the Logos found in the same book (*Wis.*, 18 : 15). Besides these, six other significant phrases appear in these two works which are peculiar to Alexandrian thought and to this epistle as *e. g.*, ὑπόστασις, θεράπων, καινίζει. A further list of twenty-one words, such *e. g.*, as τελειόω, βεβαίωσις, ἐντυγχάνειν, πρόδρομος,⁹ etc., is used in a characteristic sense in both writings. If we add to these another group of forty-four words and

See *Expositor*, Vol. I, 1875, p. 335.

phrases which are common to Philo and our epistle, and which are used in the latter in such a way as to be characteristic, *i. e.*, not as common, ordinary terms, we must acknowledge that there has been some Alexandrian influence at work upon the vocabulary. Some of these words, such as ἀπαύγασμα, τελειότης, ὑπόστασις, δημιουργός, συνείδησις belong to those to which reference has been made as being prepared by the discussions of the schools for the important part they have to take in the New Testament. Nor is the influence, as far as language is concerned, limited to mere words. There are parallelisms with the thought of Philo which give us parallel descriptions, and we find in all three writers, the author of the *Book of Wisdom* Philo, and the penman of the Hebrews a like fondness for compound words and such rhetorical effects as are gained by assonance and oxymoron. The finished style indicates a cultured mind familiar with Greek idiom, and capable of the nicest use of it. Again, the quotations in the epistle follow the Greek of the Septuagint, even when that differs from the Hebrew, and, what is more to our purpose, follow the text of the Alexandrian version of the Septuagint. There can be little question, then, that, as far as the expression of thought is concerned, we have the clearest traces of the influence which we have been seeking. Our final question is about the thought itself. Among modern interpreters of the epistle Pfeiderer has most clearly set forth what he conceives to be the Alexandrian molding of the substance of the letter, and he finds the following decisive marks of its shaping hand: (1) The conception of the universe as presenting the opposition of the invisible, imperishable, archetypal world, to the visible, perishable world of appearance, copied from the former. This takes the κόσμος νοητός of Philo, and applies it to the blessings of salvation. "It combines the religious conception of the kingdom of the Messiah, or of heaven with the philosophical idea of a heavenly or archetypal world." Of course, the whole is changed from ideal abstraction to concrete blessed realities. (2) The conception of Christ which, following the lead of the teaching regarding σοφία in the *Book of Wisdom*, lays more emphasis upon his metaphysical

oneness with God and raises him to the cosmical principle of the universe, although this conception "remains in the background without exercising any real influence on the writer's view of the historical Christ." (3) That conception of the death of Christ which makes it the overcoming of the devil, who has the power of death. The dualism of the epistle is of two cosmical forms, Christ and Satan; and Christ destroys the form of Satan. With these formative conceptions all the attendant teachings regarding redemption—faith, righteousness, and ultimate salvation—are in accord, and the whole from an entirely different point of view, and with different means presents substantially the teachings of Paul. This whole view is certainly fascinating. It agrees well with what we might suppose from our study of the language of the epistle. How far can it be said to be true? One thing is sure: the spirit of Philo is not in the book. The antithesis between shadow and substance is clear enough, and the changeless validity of Christianity as over against the temporal, perishable, cultus of the Jewish temple, is set forth in the realities of the heavenly sanctuary, the eternal High Priest, and the mighty intercession. Over the angels, over Moses, over every earthly priesthood He has been exalted, and our hope centers in that world to which He has gone; our faith makes it real to us. This is the very essence of the doctrine of this great epistle. While it is true that the conception of a supersensuous world as in contrast to this earthly world is a biblical conception; while it is true that other teachings, such as that of the heavenly Jerusalem, or of the angels, or of the two ages, or of Satan as having the power of death are Palestinian, it may be no less true that the FORM under which the whole is here presented is Alexandrian. Underneath and conditioning the whole presentation of the truth, is the antithesis between the "ideal world," *i. e.*, heavenly world, and the reflection of it seen in the crude forms of the temple, and the wearisome repetitions of the altar and the priesthood, which antithesis should bring every thoughtful Jew to realize how meager, after all, in these things alone, were his privileges. It was a new way of setting forth the universal, eternal truth of the gospels; of

telling of the comprehensiveness and glory of the "last" revelation; of "retranslating out of a particular dialect into a world-form," the message about a spiritual kingdom. The upper world and the future world became one as "the object of hope, the goal of perfection, the day-dream of rest, the conviction of faith." The dualism between flesh and spirit, so prominent in Paul, gives place to another which results from this antithesis between the world of blessed perfection above and imperfection here. Christians have tasted of "the powers of the age to come." They are to leave the first principles of Christ, among which is reckoned the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, and press on to perfection. This last is one of the significant words of the epistle. There enters into it the thought of satisfaction with cleansing from sin by the sacrificial act of our great High Priest, but it looks also to that consummation which comes when the world above, now ideally present, shall be ours in full possession. So the eschatology is molded by this underlying conception. Before the earthly sanctuary began, the heavenly was, and it shall be, forever in the heavenly Jerusalem where he, who is Priest forever after the order of Melchizedek, shall make intercession for us. Space permits only thus the merest outline of the form of presentation. The cold, vague speculations of the Platonist, quickened and made definite by the truth of the Christian, seem to have given form to the truth of this splendid epistle. Little need have we to try and force its teachings into the world of the Pauline type; rather, our Testament is richer in the varying forms by which it seeks to present Christ and his kingdom to us. When James and Peter, and Paul and John, and the unknown penman of this noble letter are compared, they show no contradictions. Alexandria is not out of harmony with Ephesus or Jerusalem, but, in working out her mission, has done a part that is worthy of recognition, and rich in results. With all her endeavor to separate the nucleus of truth from its Jewish encasement, and give it universal scope, she could never have succeeded alone. Philo himself is the best evidence of that, but all her endeavor was making much ready for the time when Christ himself should set aside Jewish and heathen temple alike, and when he

came and taught us to worship "in spirit and in truth," and opened to us the kingdom which shall be eternal as he is eternal, then, in part, Alexandria's words and forms were used to tell the "good tidings." To know it is but to deepen our interest in that busy complex life in the Egyptian capital; to broaden our understanding of the purpose of God among the nations; to give new pleasure to our study of the word itself.